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Michigan Supreme Court  
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REFERENCE COURT RULE 2003-47

My husband, William Wiles, passed away December 16, 1997 from chronic lung disease as a result of asbestosis. As a professional plumber/pipefitter/air and heat specialist he was required to work with materials provided to him by the industry. They killed him. He chose this type of work to properly provide for his family. He was not given a choice of materials to work with but had to perform his job (along with thousands of others) to the very best of his ability with what was provided to him. He was told these were the only products available at the time capable of exceeding existing government guidelines. At no time were they warned of the dangers of asbestos.

He slowly became ill and was diagnosed with lung cancer requiring surgery. This was unsuccessful due to the location of the cancer. He was then forced to travel 150 miles three times a week for hours of treatment. This was not for weeks but for years. Family members took time off from daily routines to assist in this endeavor. Vehicle fuel and maintenance costs quickly depleted family funds. As his lungs failed, he became completely dependent upon family, as he could not perform even the simplest of tasks. Family began a 24/7 routine of caring for him at home where he wished to remain. He finally lost the battle for his life.

This man and many others like him have the right to ask for compensation from the industry that destroyed his health. Not only does he have this right but also the right under the Constitution of the United States to request and receive a trial by Jury. Big business can not continue to lobby for political favor. Tobacco has tried and failed miserably. The auto industry has tried and failed miserably. The insulation industry has acknowledged the severe health risk of the use of asbestos. They should be the next to "Step Up To The Plate" and be held accountable.



If a cigarette or a car gas tank killed you, then the next logical step is that asbestos did also. If the manufacturers of the product change the product to prevent illness and death then they should be held liable, and they have in the past. If they should be held liable and refuse, then they should be taken to court. The Constitution of the United States grants us the right to a trial by jury no matter the ruling of a state court. The cost these men and women have expended to fight this disease has been enormous. The families of these individuals also paid a huge price during the struggle.

What it all comes down to is this. William Wiles is speaking to you from the grave, as are numerous others. He used products that he was told were safe. They killed him. What will keep these and any other manufacturers from doing the same thing again unless they are held accountable now. This is an opportunity for the voices of these workers to be heard for the last time in a court of law. Do not allow his death and those of countless others to be in vain. Let this case be heard in court and allow a jury to make the right decision. Is the Supreme Court of Michigan afraid that Big Business will lose this case? The possible ramifications of such a statement boggle the mind. Think about it.

Billie Wiles

*Sincerely,  
Billie Wiles*